



Excelsior

Student Services Staff Newsletter

February 1991

Associate Vice-Rector of Student Life Named

Dr. Donald L. Boisvert, who has been appointed to the position of Associate Vice-Rector, Services (Student Life), began his three-year term on the first of January, 1991. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Boisvert served as Executive Assistant to the Rector.

In his new position, created from a vacancy in the Student Services sector, Dr. Boisvert will have line responsibility for Student Services units (Fitness, Recreation and Athletics, Guidance Services, Office of the Dean of Students) and will ensure that student administrative services offered through the Admissions Department, the Liaison Department and the Office of the Registrar are provided in the context of a student-centred view of education, predicated on the belief that intellectual and personal growth are closely affiliated.

Dr. Boisvert brings to the position an extensive knowledge of the University, obtained as a student (B.A.,

1975; M.A. 1979) and as an employee since 1980. He has worked in the Office of the Dean of Students and as Assistant to the Vice-Rector, Academic, prior to entering the Rector's Office in 1985. An student leader, he served as Co-President of the Loyola Students' Association in 1973-74, and has been directly involved in the Student Services portfolio on a number of occasions, most notably in his present capacity as Acting Director of Concordia Guidance Services.

Although Dr. Boisvert has spent most of his adult life in association with Concordia University, his experience as Communications Assistant to the Federal Leader of the Opposition (1976-78) and as a doctoral student at McMaster University and the University of Ottawa will contribute further to both the breadth and the depth of leadership he will provide in the enhancement of student life at Concordia.

An Open Letter

Dear Colleagues:
I am very happy to be back with Student Services. I began working at Concordia many years ago in the Dean of Students Office, and though I have done other things at the University since then, this is like returning home.

In the weeks and months to come, I will have an opportunity to meet with many of you, and to exchange on our respective visions of what student life at Concordia should be about. I look forward to it. We are all a vital part of what makes the University a special place for students.

For the first time in its history, the University has made a strong statement about and commitment to the importance of student life by appointing someone at a senior level with a clear mandate in this area. We should all be proud of this recognition. This was one of the more important recommendations of the task force which reviewed the mission and structure of Student Services. Another of its recommendations was that there be a look

taken at regrouping units differently, so as to allow for greater cohesion and effectiveness. This has begun with Health Services and Financial Aid being placed on an autonomous footing.

I am aware that all of you contributed significantly to the work of the task force. One of my priorities, in conjunction with the heads of the Student Services units, will be to take a close look at the report, and to prepare an implementation plan which will be made available to you in the spring. I believe it is important that we not allow the creative energy generated by the task force to dissipate.

I am confident that I can rely on your support, which I will need, to ensure that students remain the purpose and focus of Concordia's mission. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you want to discuss any aspect of Student Services with me.

Donald L. Boisvert
Associate Vice-Rector, Services
(Student Life)

Peer Helpers

Students Helping Students

Most Student Services staff have probably heard by now about the Peer Helper Program. If you have not yet been introduced to this service, please allow me the pleasure.

The Peer Helpers are Concordia students who have received training, primarily from professionals in various Student Services departments, in listening and helping skills and university resources. They staff a listening and referral service, and are able to help other students with both personal and academic concerns.

These volunteers are trained in non-directive counselling. They never attempt to solve the problems of their fellow students, but rather actively listen, clarify what is being communicated, and offer pertinent information and support to help students make their own decisions. As part of their training, Peer Helpers learn to identify problems which are beyond the normal developmental concerns; in such cases they refer that person to the appropriate professional within the university.

Students very often feel most comfortable speaking with their peers about their problems. This program hopes to offer help and support to students when these problems are at an early stage. Issues such as loneliness, financial difficulties, Choices about sex, stress and discomfort with their chosen field of study can often be dealt with fairly easily and constructively, but as you well know, if left untended, can become so serious and complex as to threaten a student's academic success.

The fifteen Peer Helpers themselves are students from various departments, and most of them are in their early to mid-twenties, with a healthy balance of a few mature students. The dedication of the group is really quite incredible. These students, on top of their own academic commitments, and, in some cases, part-time employment, faithfully give four hours of volunteer work, plus two and one half hours of ongoing training each week. Although the service is still quite new, the numbers of students who drop in to talk to a Peer Helper, get some information, or borrow a book from our library is growing fairly steadily.

I began working on developing this program in 1988, assisted by Michelina Bertone SSA, and with the support of my colleagues in Campus Ministry. After a few brainstorming sessions with some wonderfully helpful people from different aspects of the university's service network, some of that group formed an Advisory Board which continues to help the program evolve. The members of this Board are: Pat Hardt, Health Services; Mary Scott, Guidance Services; Richard Cawley, Department of Applied Social Sciences; Tammy Powell,

CUSA Co-president; Ella Wolofsky and Ron Bourdon, Peer Helpers. As Coordinator, I chair the Advisory Board. Any of us would welcome your comments or questions about the program.

I also invite you to stop by the Peer Helper Centre, meet the people there and acquaint yourself with the space. It is located at 2130 Bishop, room 02, and is open Monday to Thursday, 12-6pm. You are sure to get a warm welcome! (If you like, you can also get a hot cup of coffee.) If you would like to reach a Peer Helper by phone, call during office hours at 848-2859, or leave a message when the office is closed.

Peer Helpers are helping students find their way to offices when they need to do so, and we hope you will send students to the Peer Helper Centre who need a supportive, caring person to talk with, or just a bit of help to sort through the university bureaucracy.

Daryl Lynn Ross, Chaplain
Coordinator, Peer Helper Program

Spirit of Christmas Fund Drive A Success

We have raised \$7,000 in this year's Spirit of Christmas Fund drive, which equals last year's, and does so without the raffle. It was again a great effort involving students, faculty and staff. Some departments developed methods to raise money — e.g. Concave collected cans and special donations at an end-of-term party and physical plant had their own raffle. These units raised about \$150 each.

We would like to thank you for your efforts in this and to inform you that we have reserved about \$4,00 in trust to be used during the year to supply food vouchers to students in need. We encourage anyone encountering such students in need to please refer them to us at Campus Ministry.

The other approximately \$3,000 has been distributed to various food banks in the area. A full breakdown will appear in the Thursday Report.

Robert Nagy,
Campus Ministry

Profiles

Claudette Fortier, International Student Advisor

Born in Asbestos, Quebec, Claudette Fortier moved to Sherbrooke to take her bachelor degree in Psychology. Since graduating in 1978, Claudette has lived in Montreal, where she has organized international student exchanges for Interculture Canada and has trained volunteers for international development projects. Her interest in people from diverse cultural backgrounds is now fulfilled by her position as Concordia's International Student Advisor.

This year, 1000 international students from 92 countries are studying at Concordia. "I hope to help them to adapt," says Claudette, "and to understand themselves. Often they are disoriented and they don't understand why they are feeling the way they are. Such is typical in the meeting of two cultures. I help them to try to decode Canadian values and behavior.

"I don't think students should give up their own values completely," she adds. "Adaptation means being open to new patterns of behavior, new values and attitudes, without losing your own."

Claudette hopes to increase the visibility of international students at Concordia. "I'd also like to start an international centre with proper resources as a place for the students to meet and work. Some of my other goals are a documentation centre, an international students association and proper funding from the university to meet international student needs."

"I think my job is challenging," Claudette says. "It's always a learning experience."

"Concordia TODAY" Info-line

Beginning early in the Spring, the Public Relations Department will be offering a telephone information line which will act as a weekly internal bulletin board for Concordia's academic, non-academic and student communities, the media and the general public. News, upcoming events, special activities and lectures, as well as important dates in the near future will be available by dialling 848-TODAY (8632).

The 90-second bilingual message will be updated every Monday. Items of university-wide interest are sought for publication. Material must reach the Public Relations Department no later than Tuesday for inclusion in the following Monday's message.

For more detailed information about this new service, dial 8632 (TODAY).

Dr. Sup Mei Graub, Interim Co-ordinator of Counselling Services

Dr. Sup Mei Graub was born in Malaysia and took her Honours B.A. in Economics at the University of Malaya. She then acquired a Distinction Scholar Teaching Diploma and went on to teach at a Malaysian college. Awarded a Columbo Plan Scholarship, she came to Montreal to study at McGill, where she took her Masters in Educational Psychology. "The study of human beings," she says, "is always fascinating."

Sup Mei began counselling at Concordia in 1971, and in 1974 she acquired her Doctorate in Counselling Psychology. "I've had quite a range of experiences," she says, "working at Concordia for the past nineteen or twenty years." Her specializations include marital counselling and stress-management, and she says that after helping so many students, "I know an awful lot about exam-anxiety reduction."

Sup Mei became Interim Co-ordinator of Counselling Services on October 1st, and she, too, says that her position is a challenge. "And I'm learning new

New Faces

Welcome to all those who recently joined Student Services. Here are some of the new people in the department this Winter...

Jennifer Keane joined the Dean of Students Office staff on January 3rd, 1991. Formerly with the Publications office of Graduate Studies, Jennifer is replacing Louyse Lussier, who is on a one-year leave of absence. Jennifer is located in Room 201 of Annex M, local 3517.

Elizabeth McIntosh joins SGW Health Services as a P/T Nurse.

Farewell

Best wishes to those leaving the staff of Student Services:

Suzanne Albert is leaving her position as P/T Nurse at SGW Health Services.

Dr. Paul Fournier, Gynaecologist/Obstetrician, is leaving the Loyola Health Services team after 12 years of service. He is known by many staff and students in the university and we wish him continued success in his work outside of Concordia.

Services for Disabled Students

Working to Change the Copyright Act

Services for Disabled Students has been actively working toward changes in the contents of Phase II of the Federal Copyright Act soon to be tabled before the House of Commons. The issue at hand concerns the need for both exemptions for educational use, as well as specifically single-copy exemption of text and articles for persons with disabilities. Over the past few months, our Services have been active in coordinating national support from Canadian colleges, universities and organizations for disabled persons towards including an exemption clause in the Copyright Act. A letter-writing campaign has been directed to Communications Minister Marcel Masse and contacts have been made with Ministers from all parties asking for their support for single-copy exemption for the disabled.

At the moment we are hopeful that our voice has been heard; however, anyone wishing to lend their support to this issue please be in touch with Ann Kerby for more information.

Access to Services for the Hearing Impaired

The Services for Disabled Students has TDD (Telephone Device for the Deaf) on both campuses. This service, which provides telephone communication to hearing-impaired people via visual display, is available to all of our Student Services staff, or to whomever you may wish to refer to our offices. Service is available on both campuses.

LOY: AD 121, 848-3536

SGW: H580, 848-3525

Please feel free to advertise our telephone numbers with the notation "TTD" after the number.

Access to Services for the Visually Impaired

All members of Student Services are welcome to make use of our voice scanners and braille printers. Publicity information, important notices, etc. that you would like make available to visually impaired students can be directly translated into braille from Word Perfect disks versions 4.1/5.0/5.1.

While we do not have unlimited resources, if anyone has a personal need for braille translation or voice text please don't hesitate to contact any of the staff. If we have the time we will be most glad to help.

Health Services

In the Classroom and the Office

Health Services is open to requests from professors or other staff departments to assist in presenting health-related issues, such as:

Nutrition

Women's Issues

AIDS and STDs

Call us at either of our locations with your request and let us explore how we can be of assistance. SGW: 3565, LOY: 3575.

Location Update

The anticipated move by Loyola Health Services to the Administration Building in January 1991 has been postponed. In preparation for the move the new address was printed in the student handbook and on many of our own handouts. We would like to reassure Student Services staff that our Loyola location is as before:

Loyola Health Services

6935 Sherbrooke St W, Rm 101

Telephone: 3675

Thank you for reading *Excelsior* —your comments and suggestions would be greatly appreciated. If there are any developments we should know about, including new services, new people, or recent achievements to celebrate, do get in touch. Submission deadline for the next issue: March 15.

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Dean of Students

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Our thanks to everyone who provided
information.

Printing

Concordia Printing Services